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Letter dated 17 November 2006 from the Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I would be grateful if you would have the attached letter from Secretary of State Rice on Iraq circulated as a document of the Security Council (see annex).

(*Signed*) John R. **Bolton**

06-61981 (E) 171106

Annex to the letter dated 17 November 2006 from the Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Having reviewed the request of the Government of Iraq to extend the mandate of the Multinational Force (MNF) in Iraq and following consultations with the Government of Iraq, I am writing to confirm, consistent with this request, that MNF under unified command stands ready to continue to fulfil its mandate as set out in Security Council resolution 1546 (2004) and extended by Security Council resolution 1637 (2005).

The Government of Iraq and MNF in Iraq continue to improve their cooperation through a security partnership to combat the challenges that threaten Iraq's security and stability. This partnership has evolved over time to incorporate the increasing leadership by Iraqi security forces in fighting and deterring terrorism and other violent acts throughout Iraq's 18 provinces. In the context of this partnership, MNF is prepared to continue to undertake a broad range of tasks to contribute to the maintenance of security and stability and to ensure force protection, acting under the authorities set forth in resolution 1546 (2004), including the tasks and arrangements set out in the letters annexed thereto, and in close cooperation with the Government of Iraq. The forces that make up MNF will remain committed to acting consistently with their obligations and rights under international law, including the law of armed conflict.

Iraqi security forces have already made substantial progress this year in developing their capabilities and, as a result, they are shouldering a greater portion of the responsibility for Iraq's security. This progress is most notable in their assumption of security responsibility in Dhi Qar and Muthana and the assumption of operational command and control over the Ground, Naval, and Air Force Commands and two Iraqi military divisions by the Ministry of Defense.

The Government of Iraq and MNF have agreed on three common goals: Iraqi assumption of recruiting, training, equipping and arming of the Iraqi security forces; Iraqi assumption of command and control over Iraqi forces; and transferring responsibility for security to the Government of Iraq. We look forward to recommendations from the newly formed high-level working group on how these goals can best be achieved. The strong partnership between the Government of Iraq and MNF is a vital factor in fulfilling these goals. Together we will build towards the day when the Iraqi forces assume full responsibility for the maintenance of security and stability in Iraq.

The co-sponsors intend to annex this letter to the resolution on Iraq that is under consideration. In the meantime, I request that you provide copies of the present letter to members of the Council as quickly as possible.

(*Signed*) Condoleezza **Rice**